(b) whether this is on account of lack of adequate economic returns from agriculture;

(c) if so, what concrete steps Government have taken to promote agriculture as a commercially viable and economically rewarding activity considering that a healthy agricultural sector is a necessary condition in the face of nation's food scarcity and for self reliance in food; and

(d) whether there is a proposal to encourage foreign investments in agriculture; if so, whether any special safeguards are proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) The Gross Capital Formation (GCF) which is the measure of investment in agriculture including investment in irrigation has increased from Rs. 13523 crore in the year 1993-94 to Rs. 27038 crore in 2000-2001. Expenditure incurred for development of irrigation infrastructure constitutes the major part of Public Sector GCF in Agriculture. The GCF due to irrigation in Public Sector has increased from Rs. 4426 crore in 1993-94 to Rs. 7247 crore in 2000-2001. In the sector consisting of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Gross Value Addition which is the value of output in the sector not of value of inputs used in production, has increased from Rs. 2,41,967 crore in 1993-94 to Rs. 4,71,981 crore in 2000-01.

In order to make agriculture economcially viable the Government announced several programmes in the current year budget, such as earmarking of Rs. 2800 crore for augmenting investment in irrigation under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme and making additional allocation of Rs. 2500 crore under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana to help in the increase of capital formation in agriculture. Further, Rashtriya Krishi Bima Yojana has been launched to provide a comprehensive risk insurance to encourage farmers in their efforts to increase production.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Drought-proof rice variety

1782. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scientists have initiated the process on drought-proof rice variety;

(b) if so, whether the University of Hyderabad in association with US-based Rockfeller Foundation, has initiated the process of elucidating drought-tolerant rice varieties, using molecular and genomic technologies;

(c) whether the research project is part of the National Rice Network Programme of ICAR;

(d) if so, to what.extent the research has been found successful; and

(e) to what extent it would be helpful to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Univesity of Hyderabad in association with the US-based Rockfeller Foundation, has initiated the research project for genetic improvement of rice for water limited environments.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise, Sir.

(e) So far, no rice variety has been identified for drought tolerance under this project.

Integrated Dairy Development in A.P.

1783. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present Status of Integrated Dairy Development Project in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) what has been the achievement of the project in that State, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Government of India had approved an Integrated Dairy Development Project in Non Operation